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THE Corporation Counsel's office has issued a form of contract to be used in the employment of architects upon New York City work, which exceeds for thoroughness any such agreement that it has been our good fortune to see. In most respects this contract is eminently satisfactory, both in the recognition of the rights of the architects and in conserving the interests of the city, but there are several points which are distinctly at variance with the schedule of the A. I. A., and of which we think the New York Chapter should take cognizance, with a view of having these defects remedied, as there is nothing which will tend so much to destroy whatever legal standing the Institute schedule may have in court, as the ability of a contestant to point to a contrary custom on the part of the municipality. Five per cent. is stipulated in this contract as the total fee for services—but no allowance is made for extra compensation on "works which involve alterations"—and it is distinctly stated that no special rate for monumental or decorative work, or for designs for furniture, cases or apparatus in excess of the general compensation of five per cent. upon the cost thereof, shall be charged, and that no extra charge shall be made for mural or ceiling decorations, any custom of architects to the contrary notwithstanding. The ownership of the original drawings, "as instruments of service," is fully recognized, as well as the author's rights "to the incorporeal designs exhibited therein and thereon"; and in all other respects, other than those mentioned above, the form of contract is one which should be eminently satisfactory to the profession.

WE have seen the drawings of the American Office Building, which is to be erected on the Strand in London by the Thompson-Starrett Company of New York, and although its greatest height is to be but twelve stories, it will, no doubt, be a skyscraper to the average Cockney. We learn that the objections originally made by the County Council, on account of the "extraordinary height" of the proposed structure, have been overcome, and that work will begin at an early date. We know that a large number of New York concerns are now figuring upon the work, it being the intention of the gentlemen who are managing this enterprise to ship almost all of the material, from structural steel to wood trim, from this country.

THE New York architects generally are more than satisfied with the new administration in the Bureau of Buildings, and most all of the abuses which obtained under the old regime are being swept away. A number of architects who were unable to obtain their rights before January first on account of their unwilling-

REGISTRATION BUREAU FOR DRAUGHTSMEN.

This bureau is established for the use of architects wanting draughtsmen and draughtsmen wanting positions, free of expense to either party.

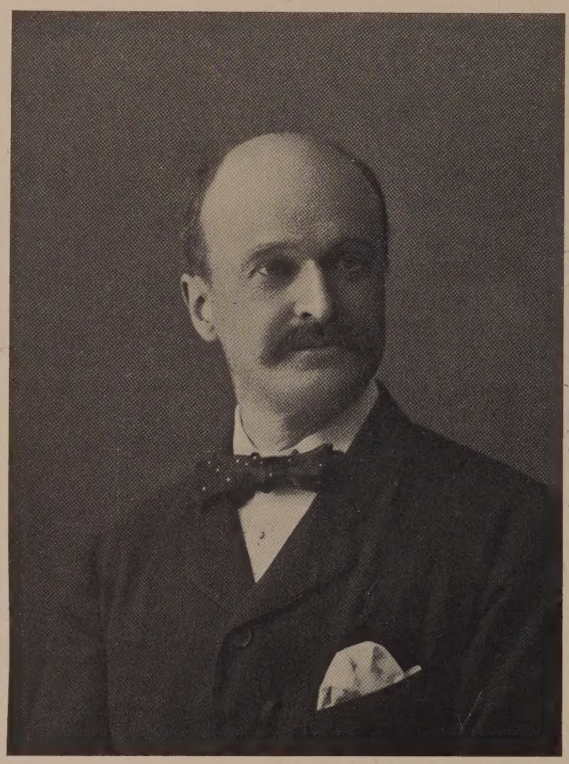
All draughtsmen wishing positions may register by answering the following questions:

Name and address?
Married or single?
What experience have you had?
Name and address of last employer?
Salary expected?
References?

All architects wishing draughtsmen are invited to use this bureau.

ness to bow to practices then in vogue, have had their grievances redressed, and Commissioner Stewart has announced both publicly and privately that he wishes the building interests to thoroughly understand that he is ready at all times to hear complaints and to do his best to see that the law is applied impartially.

THE warning sounded by Mr. Cass Gilbert in a recent number of The Chronicle against the viciously bad quality of much of the so-called "fire-proofing" done in this city is exceedingly timely and to the point. Architects and engineers from western cities have frequently expressed their opinion upon this matter in a forcible manner, and a prominent engineer, who recently emigrated from Chicago to New York, stated to us last week that in his opinion no western city would tolerate work done with such gross carelessness and "almost criminal neglect as is now the case in New York City." How arches are continually laid in cold weather in slow-setting cement, and in addition to this it is the habit of the average contractor to remove his centers two days after the arches are constructed. In consequence of this carelessness, sagging and even falling of arches is not by any means infrequent, and as Mr. Gilbert very properly points out, "any old thing" is usually "considered good enough for the concrete fill which, when mixed honestly, is rarely richer than one to six."



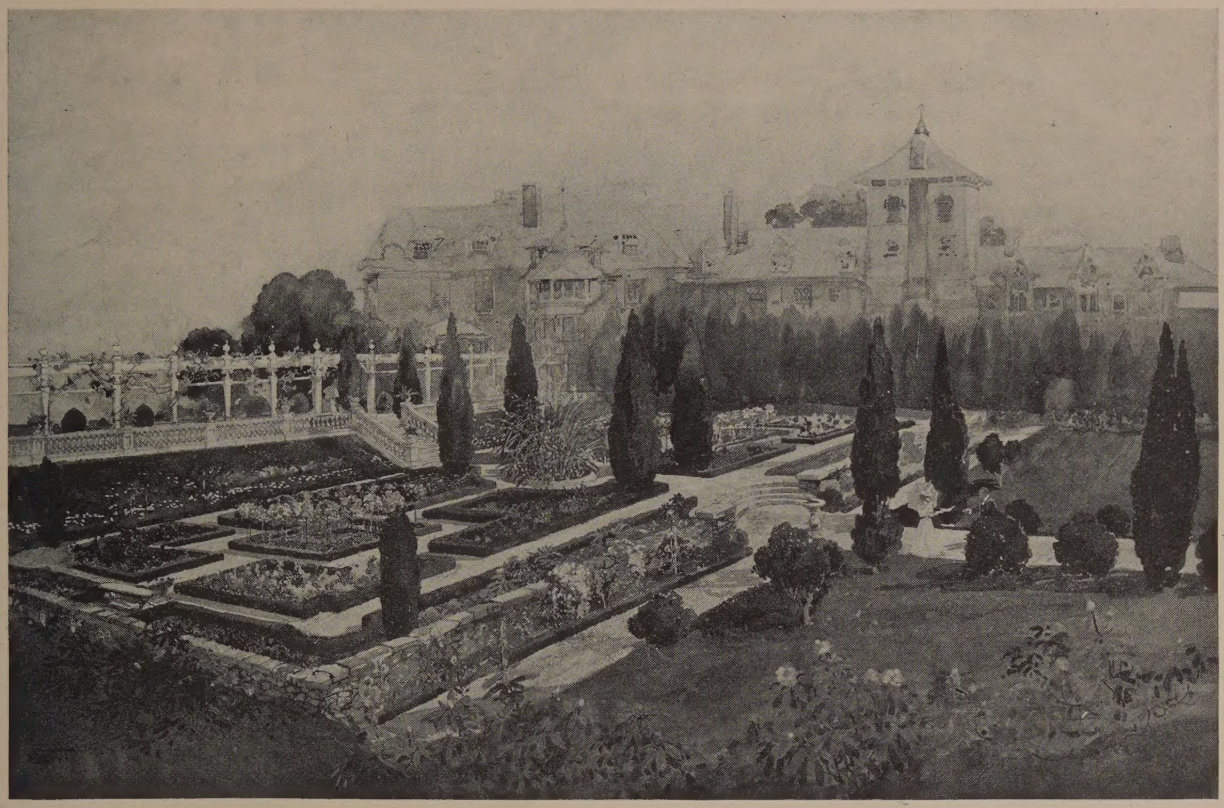
MR. CHARLES F. McKIM.

WHETHER from an excess of wealth or as a protest against the skyscraping tendencies of the average business building, two important financial institutions have determined to erect new structures in the business portion of New York, where they will be the sole tenants, and on which the architectural problems are to be approached in a more monumental than commercial spirit after the manner of the Clearing House in Cedar Street. These two conspicuous examples will be the National Park Bank, which is about to erect a new building on Fulton Street, adjoining their present structure on Broadway, from designs by Mr. Donn Barber, and the Banking House of Speyer & Company, for whom Messrs. DeLemos & Cordes are about to erect a new structure in Pine Street, near Nassau. It is regretted that the unfortunate plan of our city provides so few satisfactory sites for buildings of this character, as when these two buildings are finished we feel that they will be as completely lost among their tall neighbors, as is the beautiful Clearing House, which, if set upon the axial line of some prominent thoroughfare, would be a distinct addition to the few artistic conceptions of which New York can boast.

NEW York City is about to erect a number of new bridges. As engineering works under the administration of the experienced engineer who is now at the head of the Department of Bridges, we believe they will leave nothing to be desired. At a recent dinner, given by the Municipal Art Society, the Bridge Commissioner deplored that his department was provided with absolutely no architectural assistance, and he asked the co-operation of the societies, whose special privilege it is to keep a watchful eye upon the artistic needs of the city, that a competent architect be appointed to collaborate with the engineers in designing the new structures which are to span the East River. The League and the Institute might fittingly take up this matter and urge such an appointment.

THE protest of Mr. Charles M. Shean in a late issue of "Municipal Affairs" against the prevailing national tendencies in the "Decoration of Public Buildings" is one which should be taken to heart by every architect whose privilege it is to design a public building which is so treated. Mr. Shean protests against the fashion of decorating our public monuments with mural decorations, bearing little, if any, reference to our national history, and he points to the examples of France where every opportunity of a similiar nature has been seized, not only to gratify the artistic instinct but also to commemorate some great national event. This argument may displease the apostles of "art for art's sake"; but in our opinion the advice is sound, particularly at a time when Boston (so rich in historical associations) is beautifying its Public Library with "The Quest of the Holy Grail." Mr. Shean very properly points out that we have the men, and the men have the ability. But that ability is being misapplied.

Protect the title of "Architect," and confine it to duly trained men.



FORMAL GARDEN, HON. D. S. LAMONT, MILLBROOK, N. Y. C. W. Leavitt, Jr., Landscape Architect.

THE artistic and otherwise sentimental awakening of Pittsburgh, the "Smoky City," which has become an object of pride on the part of its people and of ridicule on the part of some more advanced communities, is actually beginning to manifest itself in various forceful ways. One of the most recent instances is the agitation over the "Block House," the last remaining relic of old Fort Duquesne, which is in imminent danger of being hemmed in on all sides by huge warehouses. The Daughters of the American Revolution, the principal movers in the effort to prevent the encroachment of the warehouses, have enlisted the sympathies of the Pittsburgh Chapter, American Institute of Architects, the Chamber of Commerce, and various other influential bodies. It seems improbable that the warehouse syndicate will be moved by the sentiment which prompts the opposition, but a compromise is not unlikely, whereby the "Block House" may be moved a short distance from its present and original location to a plot where a small park can be made around it and the original location marked by a tablet.

THE PARK COMMISSION EXHIBITION, WASHINGTON, D. C.

GEORGE OAKLEY TOTTEN, JR.

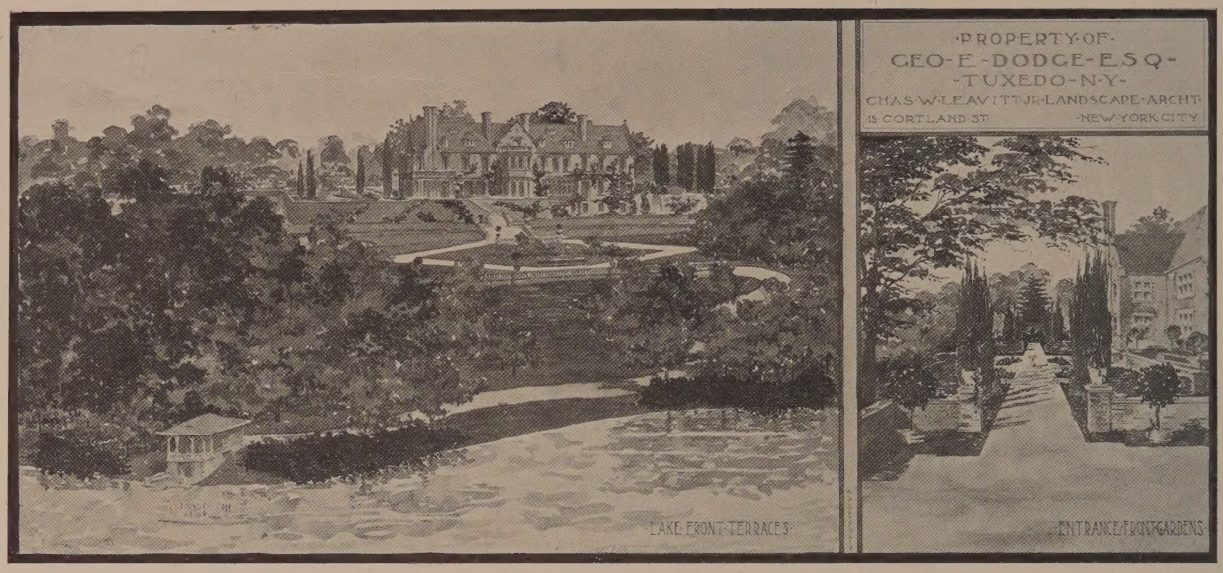
THE Park Commission appointed by the District Committee of the Senate submitted its report on the 15th instant. It must be gratifying to every member of the American Institute of Architects to know that the appointment of this Commission was largely due to the Institute.

Mr. David H. Burnham, Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, Mr. Charles F. McKim and Mr. Augustus St. Gaudens, the members of the Commission, have given the matter the most careful thought, visiting Europe in order to make a closer study of the practice of landscape architecture as applied to parks and public buildings.

The illustrative portion of the report is now on exhibition at the Corcoran Art Gallery. It includes drawings, carefully worked out models of the present and proposed arrangement, and a large collection of photographs of similar work from various parts of Europe. Besides the general plan there are several large birds-eye views in water color, and many charming sketches of various details of the scheme; there are also diagrams showing the relative area of parks in Washington as compared with those in New York, Boston, London and Paris, which emphasize the comparatively small area of parks in our National Capital.

The Commission has based its plan upon the scheme of Washington, Jefferson and L'Enfant, and has directed its attention principally to the Mall and the placing of our Government buildings. They follow more or less closely L'Enfant's scheme of an open space through the center of the Mall, from the Capitol to the Monument. Along either side of this open sward is an avenue with rows of elm trees; upon these avenues face many of the important Government buildings to be erected in the future.

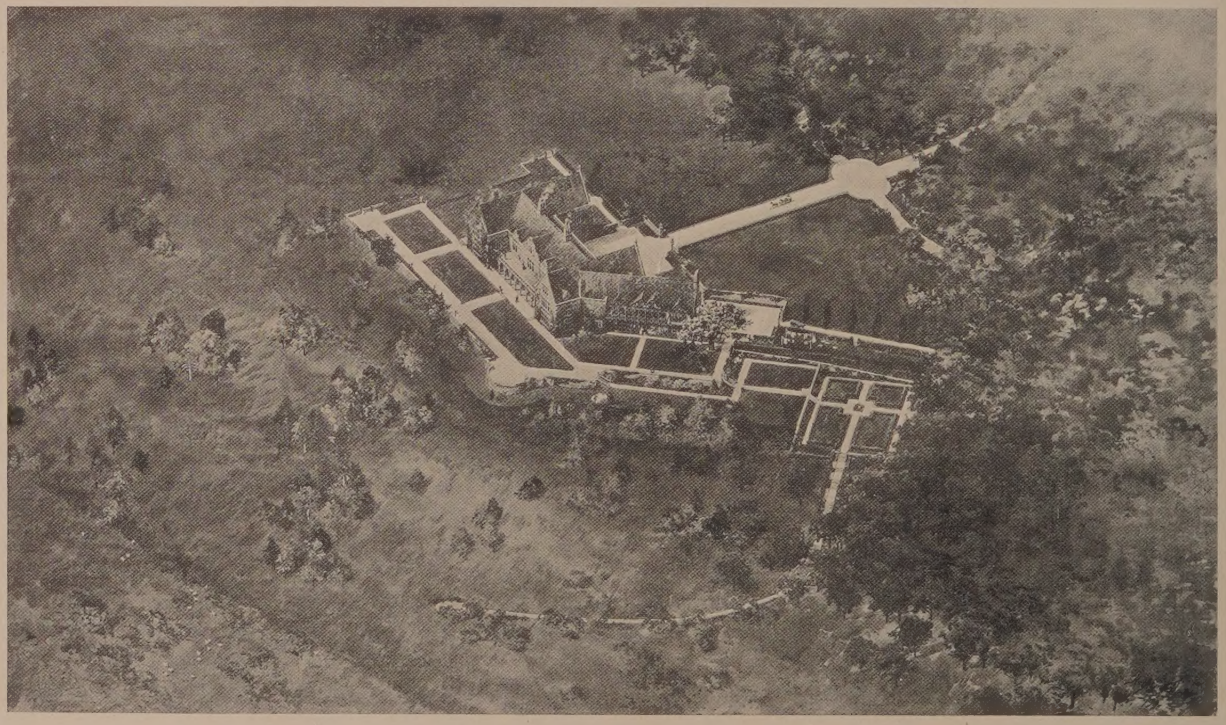
A fitting place has been chosen for a monument to Lincoln on the axis of the Mall and Twenty-second street, which is the center of divergence for several drives. The



Memorial Bridge, pointing directly to the Mansion House at Arlington, also begins from this point. While the central portion of the Mall between the Capitol and the Monument is one long stretch of green sward, the greater part of the distance between the Monument and the Lincoln Memorial is occupied by formal basins of water.

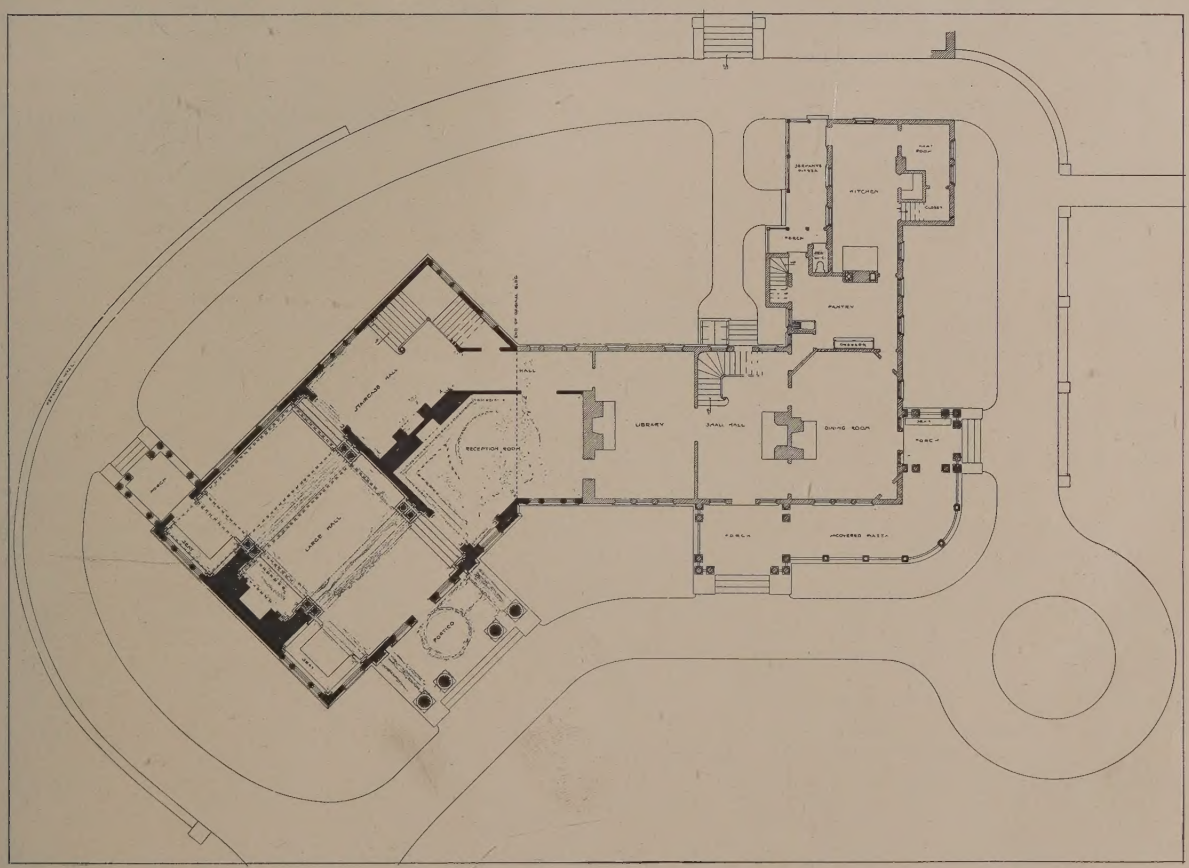
All the squares facing the Capitol are to be occupied by Government buildings. At the foot of the Capitol and the beginning of the Mall, where the Peace and Garfield Monuments now stand, is to be an open square similar to the Place de la Concorde, Paris. In the center of this it is proposed to place three monuments to famous generals.

It will be noted that the railroad tracks no longer cross the Mall, the Commission recommending the erection of a new Union station of gigantic size approximately upon the site of the present Baltimore & Ohio station. At a recent meeting of the Park Committee of the Washington Board of Trade it was the unanimous conclusion that the result of the work of the Park Commission would be well worthy of its efforts if it accomplished nothing more than the removal of the railroad tracks from the Mall.



DESIGN FOR THE GROUNDS OF A COUNTRY HOUSE IN NEW JERSEY. J. L. Greenleaf, Landscape Architect.





EXTENSION TO RESIDENCE, AND PLAN, HALEY FISKE, BERNARDSVILLE, N. J. N. Le Brun & Sons, Architects.



HALL, SHOWING STAIRCASE, RESIDENCE, HALEY FISKE, BERNARDSVILLE, N. J. N. Le Brun & Sons, Architects.

Taking up the transverse axis of the Mall, passing through the White House, we find that all the space facing Lafayette Square is to be devoted to sites for Government buildings. Further down opposite the White lot is the Armory. Continuing this axis we find the point of intersection of the two axes to be in front of the Monument. Here it is proposed to make a sunken garden, with beautiful basins of water, resembling somewhat those of the Tuilleries in Paris. South of the Monument are athletic tracks, public baths and gymnasiums. At the termination of this axis is another memorial—a Memorial to the Constitution of the United States.

The entire water front on the Mall is converted into a parkway, skirting the banks of the Potomac, with broad landing places, splendid drives and the like.

The plan also includes the development of an outlying system of parkways, connecting and surrounding with many beautiful drives the entire city.

The exhibition is unique of its kind, and is of interest not only to every resident of Washington, but to the whole country as well. Let us hope it may be possible to have the collection exhibited in many of the large cities, and thus have the results of the work of the Commission brought before the entire country.

The scheme as now presented is so magnificent, not only in its original conception, but in every detail, that, undoubtedly, it should be accepted in its entirety and carried out to its fullest realization.

A COMBINATION ROOM.

"I HAVE an architect friend," said the man who knows a good many people, "who has a design for an apartment house that will work a revolution in accommodations for those persons who cannot afford to have more than one room. He has fitted up an apartment in his own house as a sample and it really promises amazing results. I was talking to him the other evening on the problem of city living for people of small means, bachelors and bachelor maids, and that kind principally, when he asked me to come with him and see what he had evolved on that line. We went up to his third floor—he is able to own a house—and he ushered me into an apartment which was not twenty feet long and ten wide, with a fine large window at one end and a small door at the other. He asked me what I thought of it, and I looked around a minute to reach a conclusion. It was nicely carpeted, there was one chair, and there was a two-light chandelier about the centre of the ceiling. The room was nicely papered on one wall and at the ends, but the opposite side wall was entirely wainscoted, as I thought. I told him it looked all right for a sitting-room for one, but beyond that its usefulness seemed to me to be somewhat restricted. He laughed and asked me if I really thought so, and going over to the wainscoting he turned up a little handle and opened a door. It revealed a closet big enough to accommodate all the clothes an ordinary

person would care to have. Below it there was a drawer for shoes and that sort.

"Then he went right on with his revelations, leaving me to stare at him. He turned down a nice bed similar to the sleeping-car variety; adjoining it was a chiffonier with half a dozen drawers in it and a glass at the top, the glass being concealed by a lid which dropped down, making a shelf for toilet articles. Beyond was a washstand opening up in the same way, with water tank, bowl, slop jar and all. In another place was a door that fell down, making a small table, and revealing a cupboard where dishes and food might be kept; in still another, a similar lid dropping made a writing table and revealed space and shelving for a good-sized library, with a nook for ink, pens and such things. A half dozen leather-covered seats were hidden in the same way ready to be pulled down for use, and behind each of them was shelving, the depth of the wainscoting being about two feet. Above the bed and elsewhere about the wainscoting were drawers and shelves, room for a trunk, and little cubby-holes for storing things, until really in that one wall, twenty feet long and ten feet high, was room for more stuff than nine-tenths of the people have.

"I forgot to say that the inside of the high closet for clothes was a mirror two feet by six in size and hung just right to see one's self in when he was ready to go out. I looked at the lay-out of household conveniences in amazement, and when he had shut it all up again, leaving a handsome, well-lighted sitting room, I could scarcely realize that I was not in the home of a magician who touched the walls and brought forth what he wished. My friend told me he had more conveniences in mind for rather larger rooms, one being a shower-bath to take the place of the washstand. He said his idea was that this kind of a room could be used in houses of any kind, but he designed it especially for the apartment house of the future, where in small space a man or a woman might get some of the comforts of a home in a room that would cost only $15 a month rent, and still be a good investment for the real estate owner. 'The Lord only knows when the good time is coming,' concluded the talker, 'but thousands are waiting for it.'"—*New York Sun.*

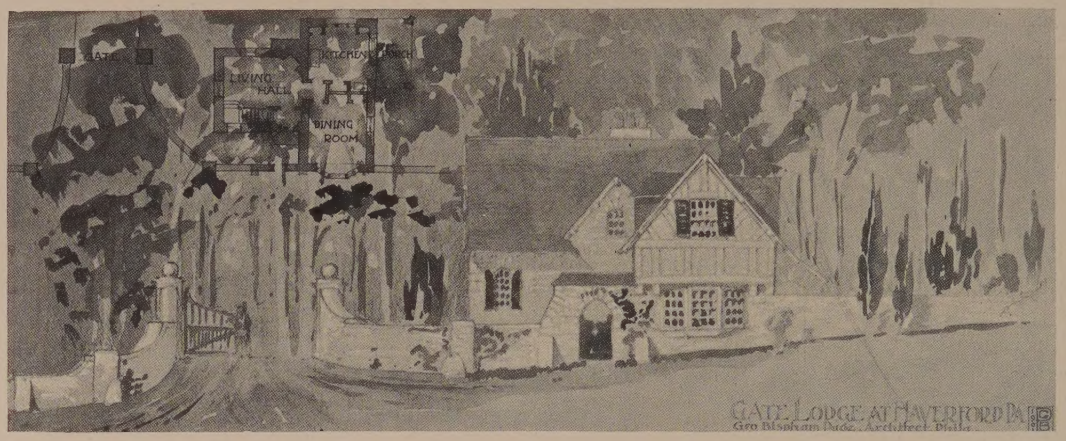
MATERIALS AND APPLIANCES.

A. D. RUSSELL.

SELECTION forms an important *role* in the modern practitioner's work, for he has to decide as to various questions and matters relating to building. In the choice of materials and appliances he has to display both knowledge and judgment if he would escape the charge of incompetence. The architect has no time nor sufficient technical knowledge to design special kinds of construction—like fireproof floors, heating or ventilating arrangements for his buildings—and he has therefore to



HALL, SHOWING FIREPLACE, RESIDENCE, HALEY FISKE, BERNARDSVILLE, N. J. N. Le Brun & Sons, Architects.



DESIGN FOR A GATE LODGE AT HAVERFORD, PA. George Bispham Page, Architect.

avail himself of a variety of manufactures and inventions of others, which are really becoming too numerous to examine with care. All that we can do is to try and tabulate or classify those things that the architect is in the habit of specifying, and endeavor to discover some general principle that may assist us in arriving at a fair estimate of their merit. This is no easy matter, for however anxious an architect may be to keep pace with modern improvement, he is very reluctant to give up certain things that he has found to be good and reliable—such as certain bricks and sanitary fittings and particular fastenings and appliances. Occasionally, a revision is necessary to be made—that is, of old things that have given place to new, or that have become obsolete.

At intervals of time this process of rejection is repeated; materials and appliances fall out and others take their place, according to the law of the "survival of the fittest." A good lock or fastening forces itself upon the architect's attention when he first sees it; but there are other things which are more slowly apprehended. Probably it is some patented material for partitions or lining-walls, a sanitary fitting, a new paint, or a floor system.



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Wurts, Photo.

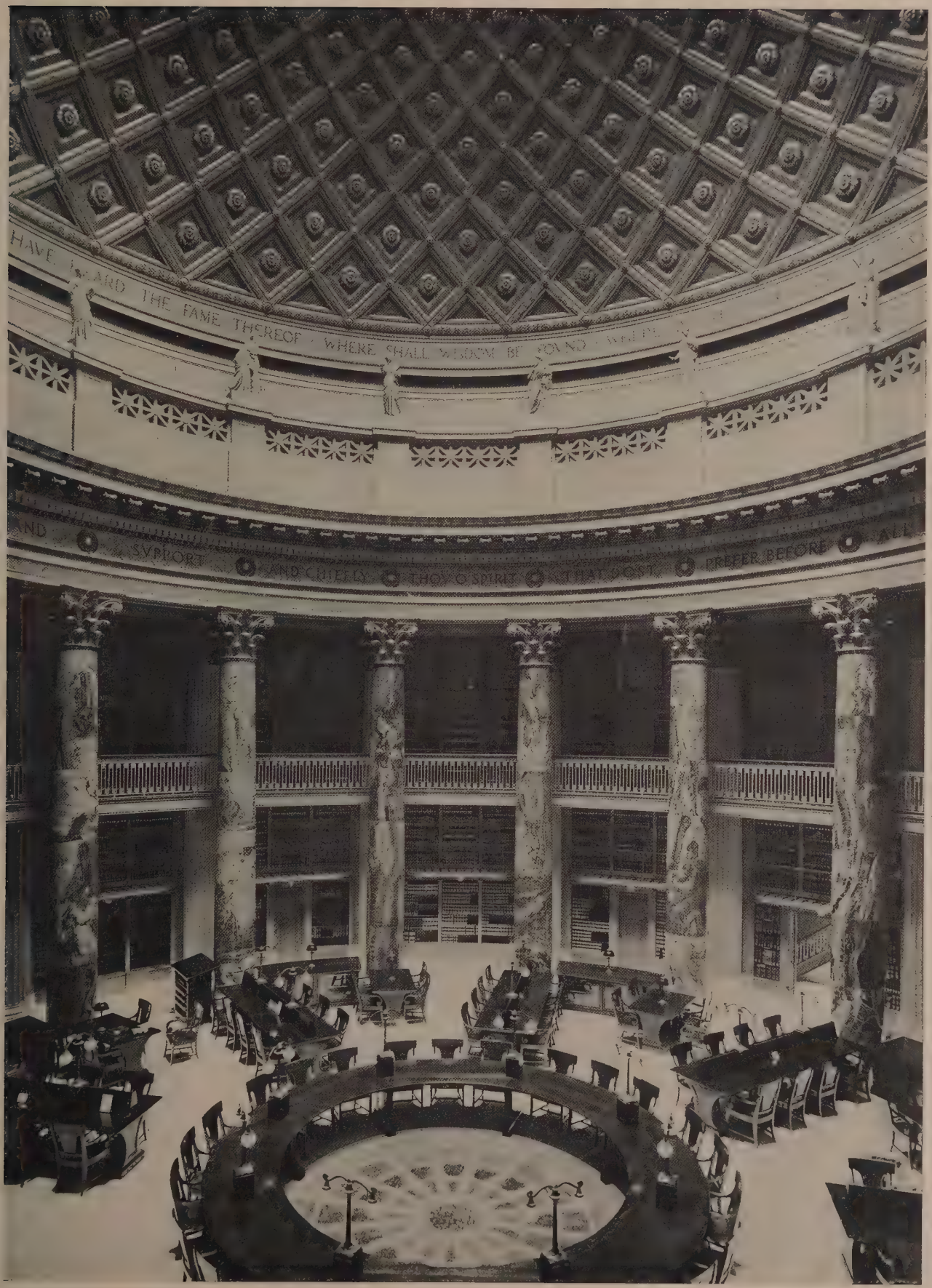
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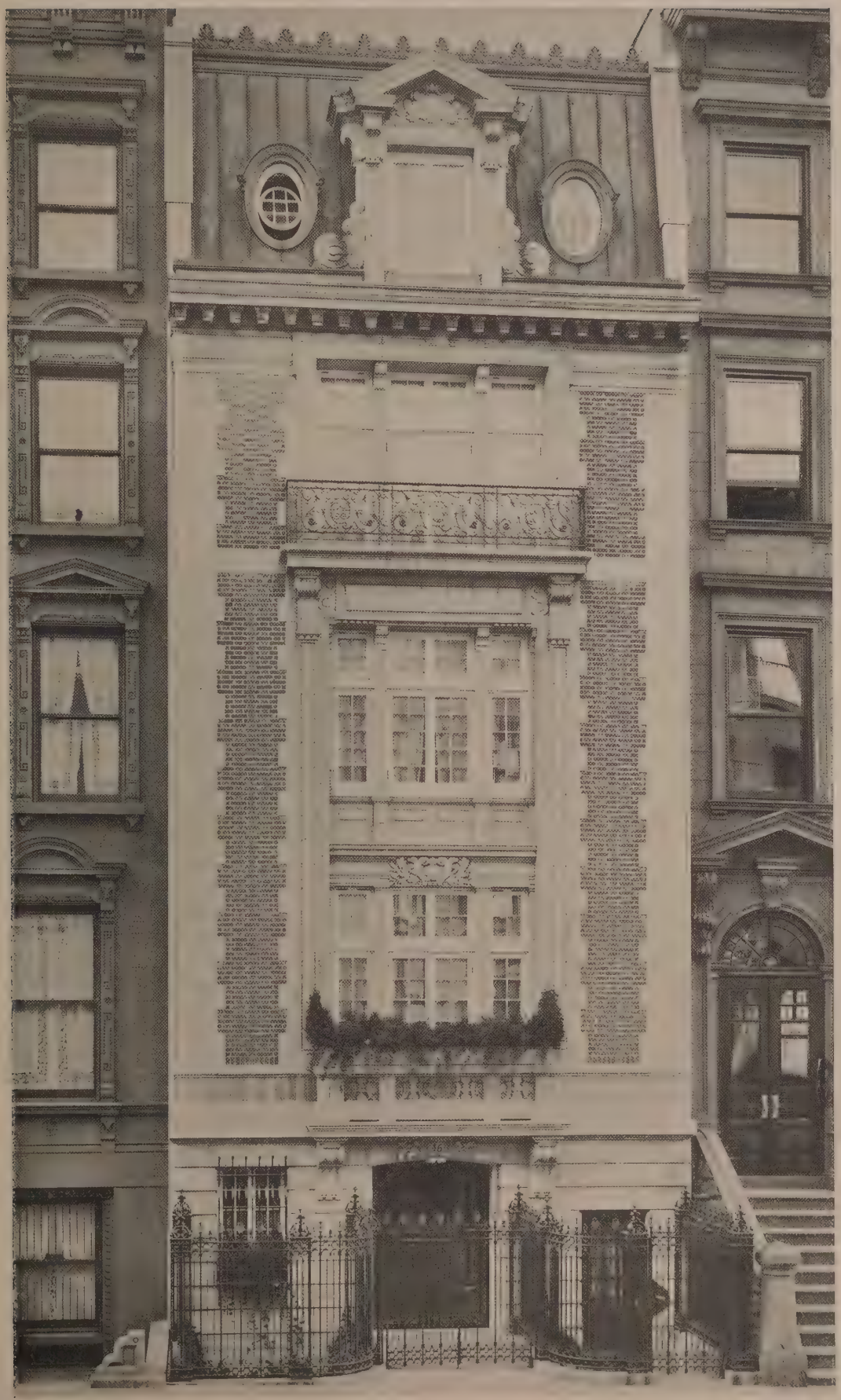
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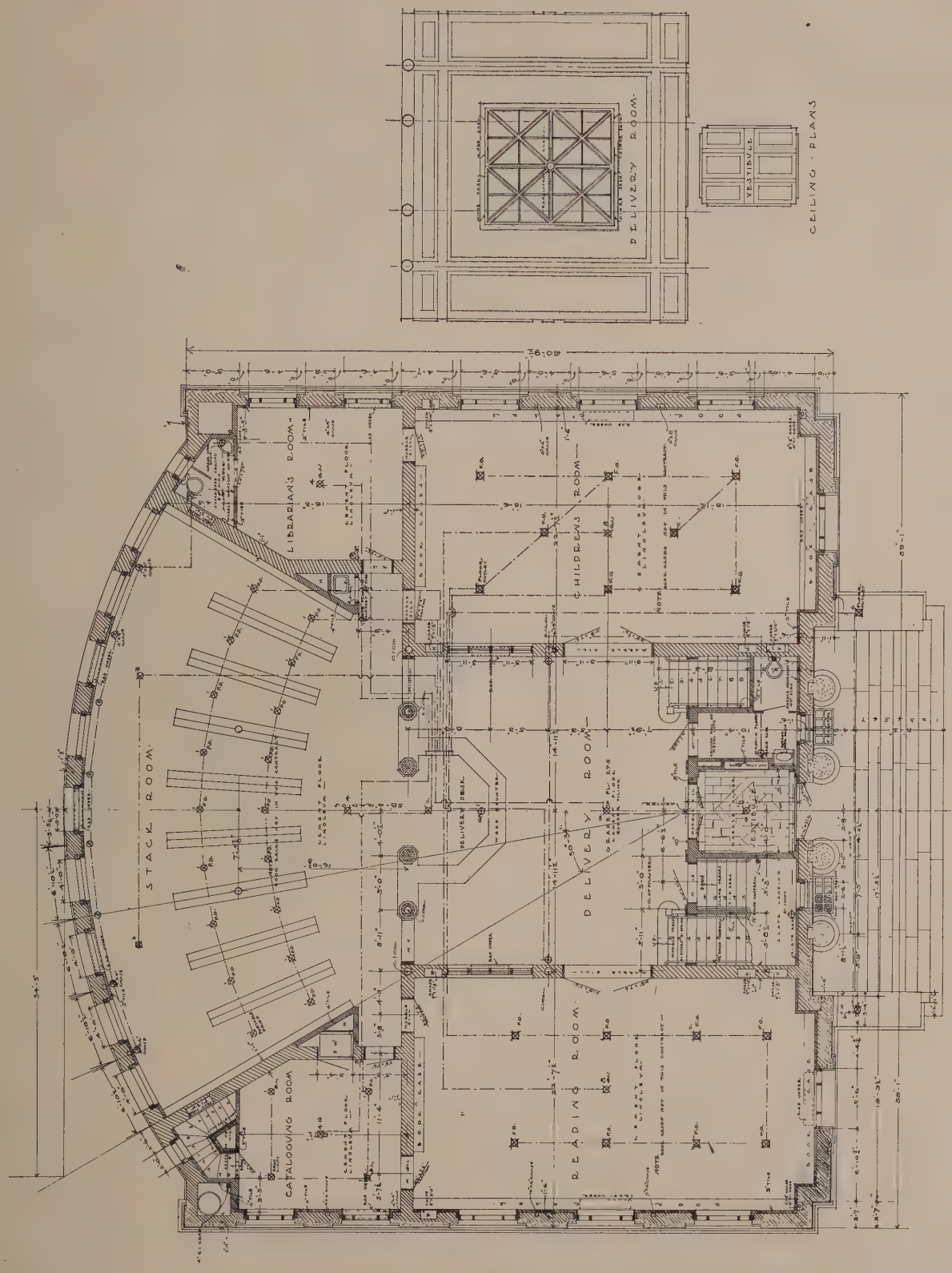
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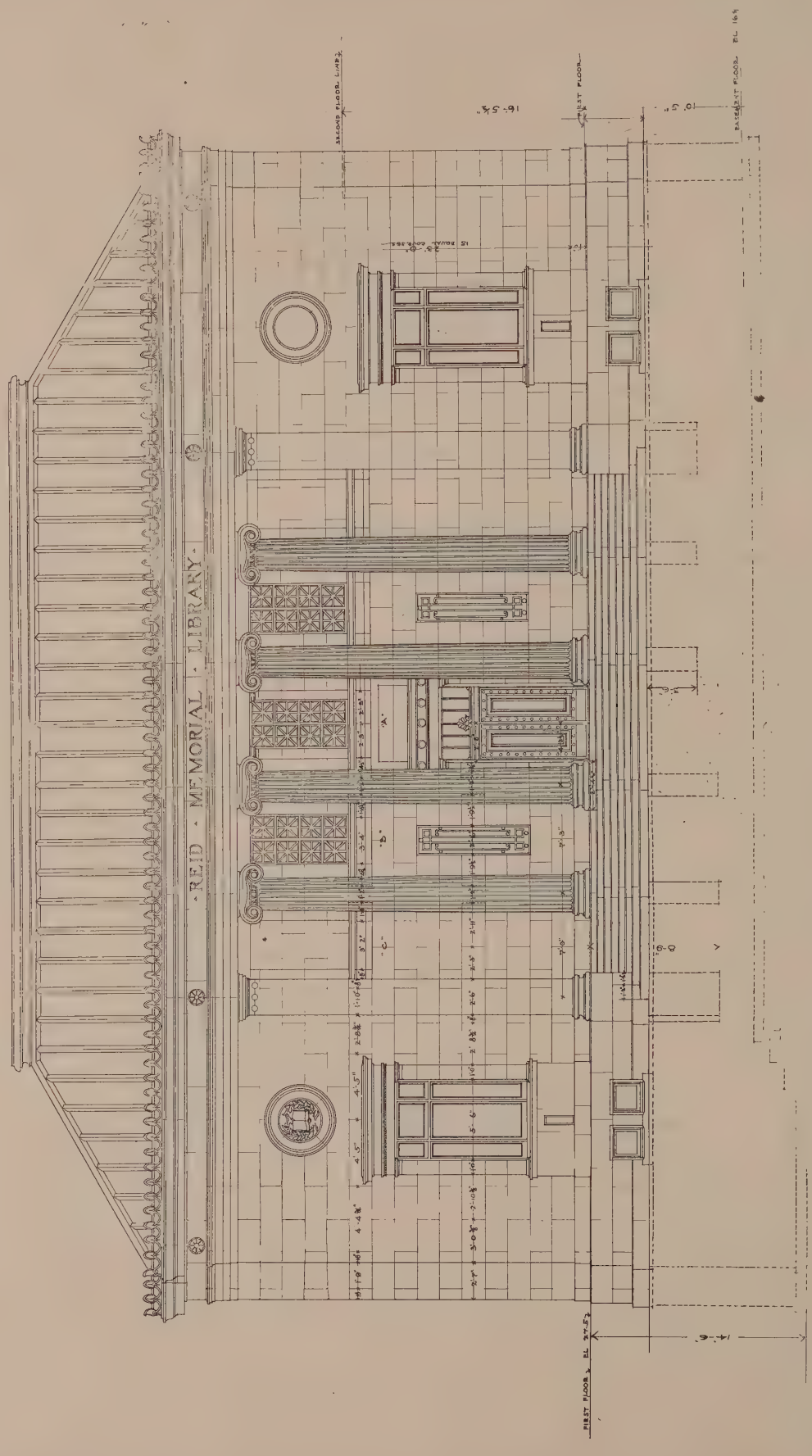
Wurts, Photo.

York & Sawyer, Architects.

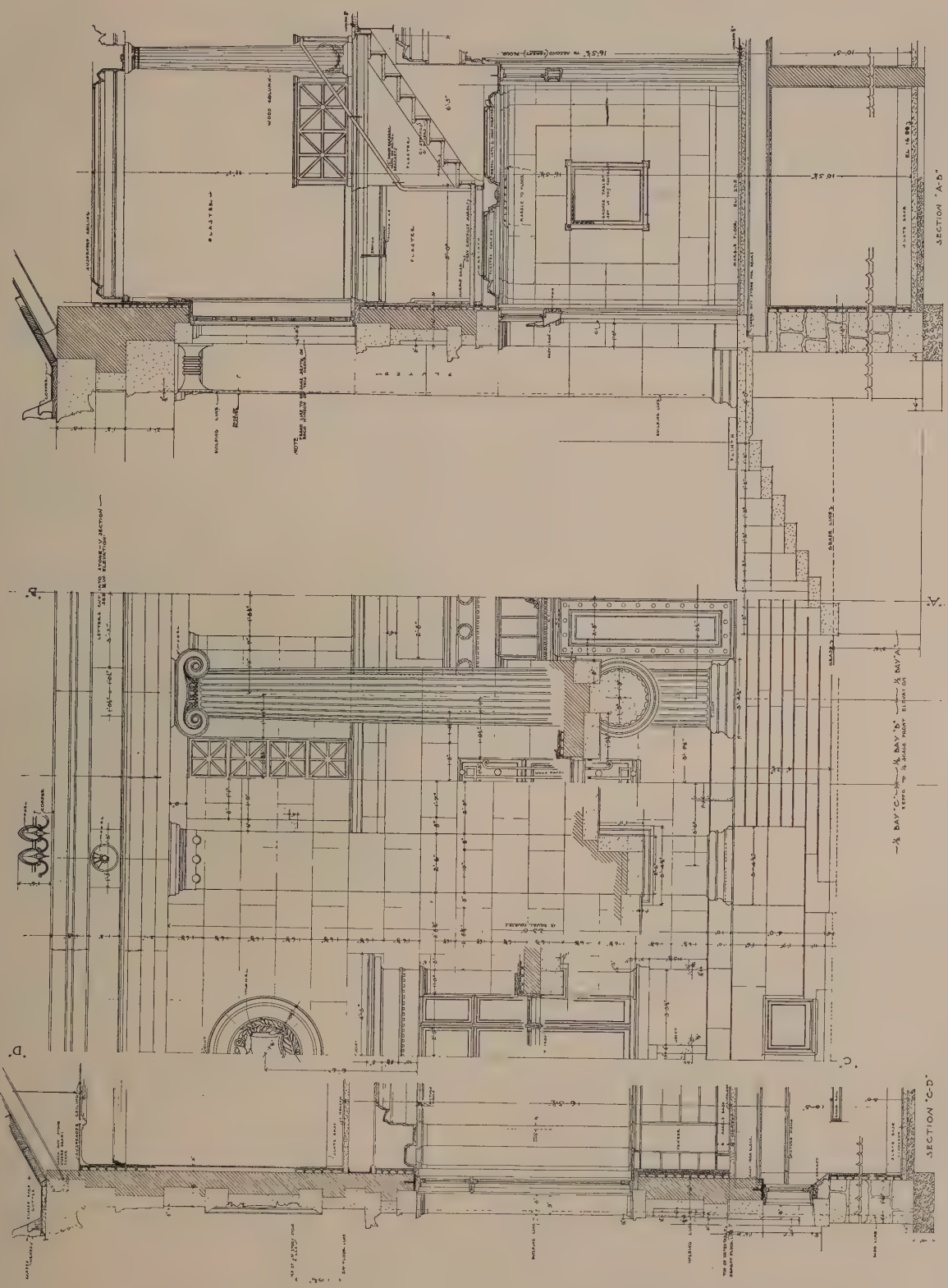
RESIDENCE, DR. JOHN S. WHITE, 46 WEST 54TH STREET, NEW YORK.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN, REID MEMORIAL LIBRARY, PASSAIC, N. J. Jackson, Rosencrans & Canfield, Architects.



FRONT ELEVATION, REID MEMORIAL LIBRARY, PASSAIC, N. J. Jackson, Rosencrans & Canfield, Architects.



DETAIL OF FRONT ELEVATION, REID MEMORIAL LIBRARY, PASSAIC, N. J. Jackson, Rosencrans & Canfield, Architects.

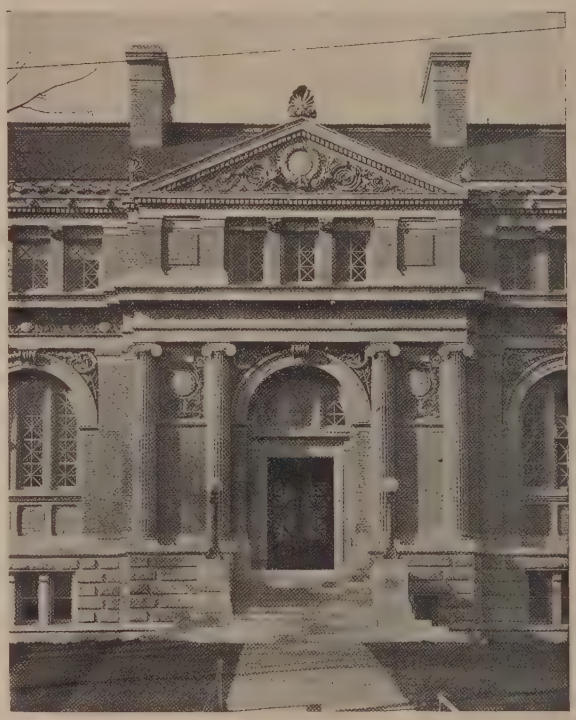
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Davis & Brooks, Architects.

Each of these things has to be apprehended or investigated by different methods. If it is a new cement or patent stone, or a floor, we naturally prefer to wait till we read of some well-authenticated experiments or tests, or some valued opinion, before we use it; the effects of the atmosphere and certain solvent agents like acids have to be considered; we are not sure how a new paint or fabric will last under the action of moisture or heat. If it is a sanitary fitting, we like to have an assurance of its action for some time, to see how it operates—whether it will soon get out of order, &c.; but in the case of many appliances and inventions, like door or window fastenings, weather-resisting casements, a weather bar, or a prismatic light, for example, when the evidence of our senses can be directly appealed to, we at once give our assent or not. These are things that immediately appeal to our common sense; directly we see them we approve them, and they are mainly mechanical in operation, and do not require experiment or experience to ratify their claim to superiority or the reverse.

With the multiplicity of inventions and appliances in the market, it becomes absolutely necessary, however, for the architect to examine for himself the various claims made by tradesmen and manufacturers. Our leading and experienced men have no difficulty in selecting the best in the market; but the younger and less experienced are not in the same favorable position; and it is for these we mainly make a few suggestions that may be found of service. A great many architects necessarily rely on recommendation and advertisement only. The young practitioner can fairly decide for himself which of the goods are the most likely to meet his requirements or appear to deserve a trial. To obtain evidence of the merits of any particular manufacture personal inspection is necessary. There are others in the profession who do not definitely specify the goods of any individual firm, but leave it open to the after-

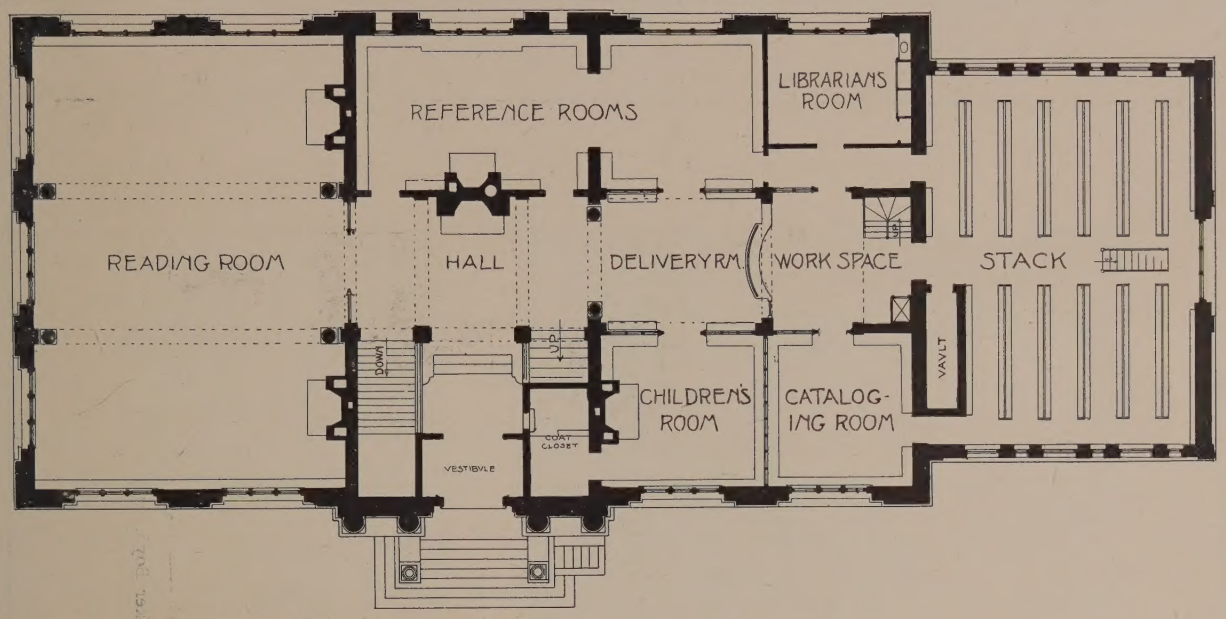


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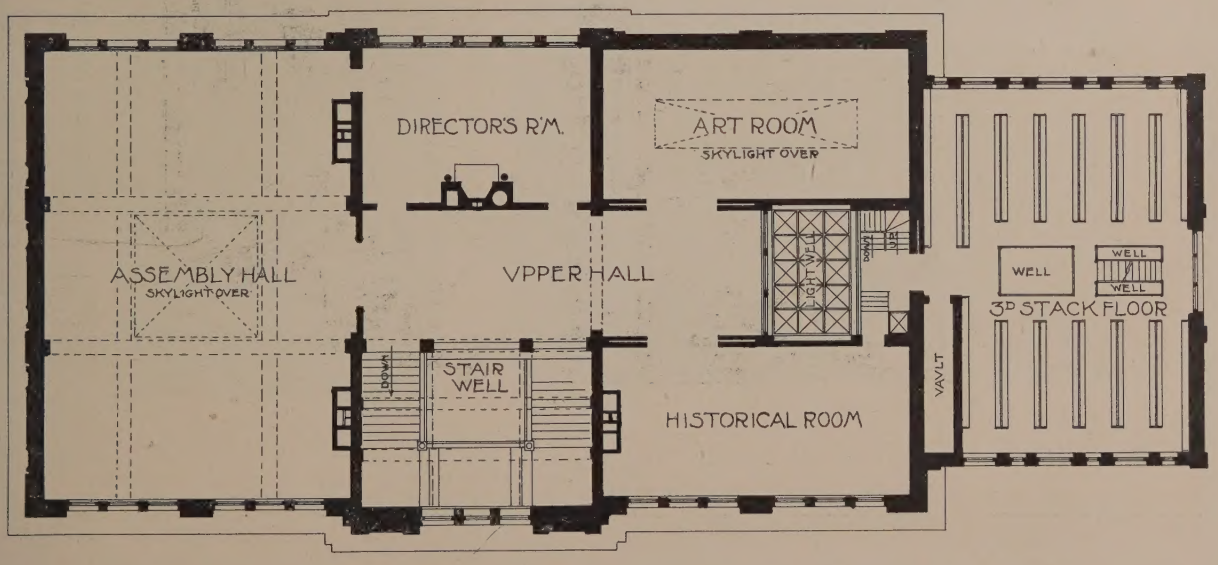
selection or approval of themselves or their clients—a method of contracting that is not satisfactory. The contractor, under this arrangement, takes advantage of the indefinite, and selects his own materials and manufactures; goods are ordered of an inferior quality, or the client knows nothing of the most approved manufacture, and selects fittings or appliances that are distinctly inferior—perhaps those of a showy design. For instance: the owner selects his own stoves and grates that may be inferior in construction and design, or he chooses his hardware, his gas or electric light fittings, his wall-papers and decoration. The architect may acquiesce, and the result of the arrangement is that the goods are quite out of harmony with the design of the building:—everybody is dissatisfied, and the manufacturers of better things have a right to complain. Of



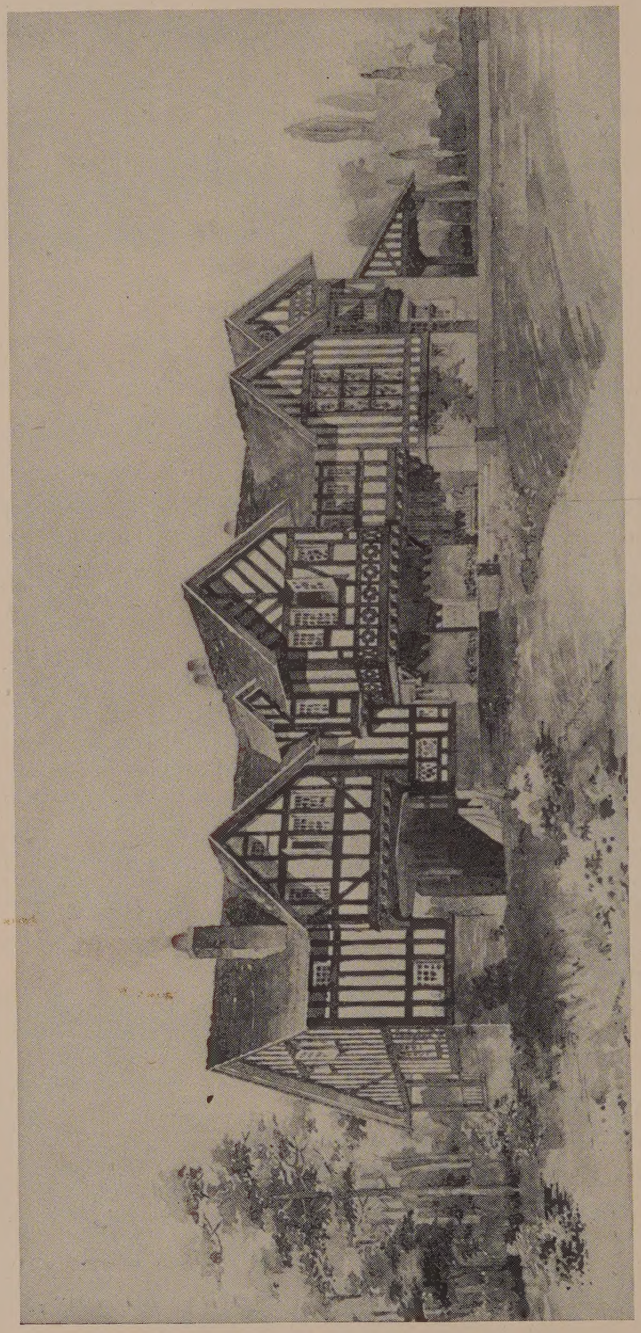
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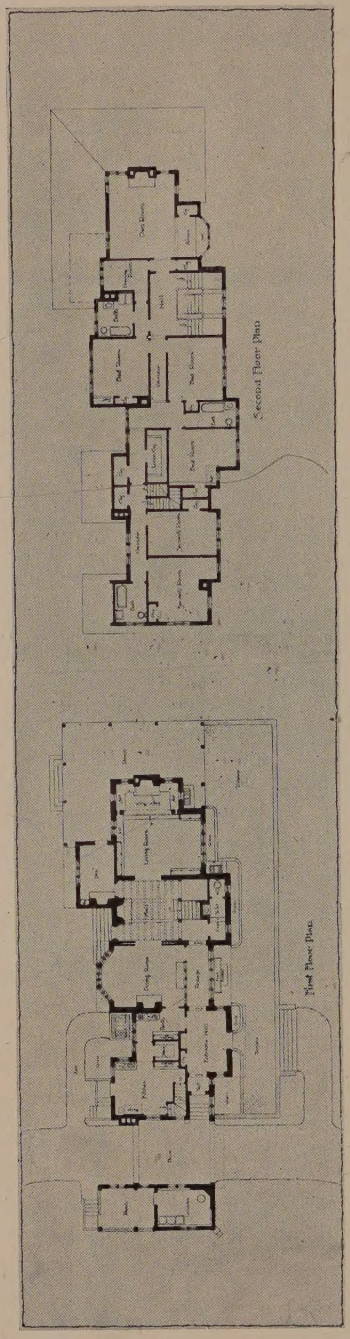
course, the architect is blamed: he ought to have specified grates and fittings that were in keeping, or of improved kind; his complacent desire to consult the taste of his employer recoils on his own head. If he is employed to design the building, he should be the only competent person to select what pertains to the building in the form of fittings and decoration. If certain goods are left for his approval, he should exercise the right of selection and the only way to do this is to provide an amount to be expended by the architect, or to give prime-cost amounts and to name the firm of manufacturers. Inattention to these details gives the contractor an opportunity to use inferior articles and to substitute other patterns than those intended.

There are certain criteria that may be usefully applied in selecting materials, appliances and methods. These are generally (1) fitness or suitability, (2) durability, (3) good taste. And it is necessary to bear in mind some scientific classification of the goods, so as to apply the proper tests. The test that is applicable to any material like an artificial stone or cement would, of course, be very different to that to be used in the choice of a fireproof floor or a metal casement. The conditions are more varied and complex in one case than the other. Those materials or contrivances that can be tested by experiment only or by trial more or less protracted, form a class of goods quite distinct from appliances and inventions that are chiefly mechanical in their construction and use, and for this very



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reason it is more difficult to appraise them. A patent cement or artificial stone, or fireproof material requires time and experience to test its qualities; but the simple fastening or latch can be decided upon without hesitation. Between these extremes come a number of complex inventions, as traps or ventilators, the merits of which depend upon conditions which can be estimated only after a series of tests have been made. We allude to such inventions as sanitary systems. The action of traps to insure a good water seal, and to prevent siphonage, methods for disconnecting houses from sewers, ventilating systems and appliances, such as cowls, and which latter, as we have seen, cannot be so easily connoted or their results determined as some imagine—systems and appliances for heating, hot water appliances, and the like. All these systems, or appliances, or inventions, depend not merely on mechanical, but pneumatic, hydraulic, and other physical laws, and to examine or test them it is necessary to do so under precisely the same conditions under which they will be used in a building. We know how impossible it is to do so with any assurance, as one factor, such as the pressure of the atmosphere or temperature, may vitiate the result. The fire-proof floor, or any method of construction, cannot immediately approve itself; the architect waits for experimental tests or the experience of others; how it has behaved when subjected to a fire. So that many building materials, appliances, and inventions must be judged according to a certain standard and varying conditions which the architect ought to comprehend so as to be able to apply the right mode of test. For example, a very ingenious arrangement of concrete and steel may not be the most fire-resisting for a partition or roof, if the chief condition of resistance is not present, or if the materials are combined in such a way as will lead to unequal stresses. The architect, in his selection of these forms of construction, is liable to be drawn away by points that are immaterial, such as the sectional forms of iron or steel; or, if it is a heating apparatus, he is likely in selecting a special apparatus, to overlook the peculiar conditions of the building—for instance, the importance of warming the air of the apartment. Hot coils or radiators are excellent for some purposes where radiant heat is desired; but they heat only one side of a person, and we cannot warm air by diffusing warmth through it, equally, except by having recourse to hot water, hot air or steam. In rooms with large windows their chilling effect is so great that radiant heaters would be almost useless, and these conditions must be taken into account in selecting a system or special apparatus. It is for the architect to exercise his judgment, not to call in a firm of makers who will, of course, recommend their own system—admirable for some purpose, but not suitable to all circumstances.

* * *

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